



# INSIGHT

## AUGUST 2019

**This monthly newsletter brings together articles of interest and opinions from the world of art history and visual culture. This month we present some longer reads.**

### **WHAT IS ART? AND OTHER QUESTIONS**

When writer, Siri Hustvedt, visited Trondheim for a conference about the 17th Century writer and thinker Margarat Cavendish, she also took time to talk with Märit Aronsson about what art can be. In this interview, 'Intersubjectivity, Curiosity and an Ivory Hedgehog', Hustvedt talks at length about art; particularly how we perceive art, how we engage with art, how we think about art, and our 'intersubjective' relationship with art. As with her writing, be it her academic essays or her novels, Hustvedt draws upon her broad scholarship of the arts, humanities and sciences to make some compelling points. <https://bit.ly/35seNcZ>

### **CHINA'S GHOST MUSEUMS**

China is undergoing the biggest museum building boom in history. However many of these new, architectural showpieces remain empty and un-programmed. 'Museums in China are a distinctly modern intrigue. The country's first museum wasn't built until the second half of the 19th century, and it was built by a European at that.... museums in the West tend to face the challenge of how to display their massive collections...Chinese museums, on the other hand, often have the opposite problem: a plethora of massive, beautiful buildings filled with nothing. Nowadays, 'Museums and other cultural facilities are a big part of the identity creation and branding of China's new cities and districts. These are places without history, whose stories are just starting to be written'. <https://bit.ly/2QG82QE>

### **THE CASE FOR TEACHING YEMENI ART HISTORY**

'What business did I have overhauling the traditional material of the survey course so radically to include

civilizations, places, and works that have notoriously remained on the margins of mainstream archaeology and art history?' Turns out quite a lot. 'If we truly strive for a picture of human civilization in all of its varied splendor and achievements, the time to talk about the great kingdoms of South Arabia...' Lily V Filson gives a brilliant account of her first year of teaching as an adjunct professor of art history and how it became a campaign to raise students' awareness of the art and archaeology of Yemen. <https://bit.ly/2XDWleB>

### **DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY**

Hannah Höch was a formidable artist, thinker and writer. She 'faced countless obstacles as a boundary-pushing female artist in the 1920s—not least of which was blatant disregard from the bulk of her male colleagues.' Höch produced numerous essays and interviews throughout her life, which highlight her unique ingenuity, curiosity, and resilience. In this article Alexxa Gotthardt brings together some of Höch's powerful and timely words of wisdom. <https://bit.ly/2D6gRem>

### **MODERN AMERICAN ART AT TATE 1945-80**

'Eleanor Antin's Blood of a Poet Box 1965–8 is a slightly battered, second hand, brass-hinged specimen box covered in green leatherette and containing one hundred numbered glass slides, each of which holds a blood sample taken from a different American poet..' In her essays for this new online publication, art historian Lucy Bradnock, looks in depth at this and other works by Eleanor Antin in relation to the 1960s New York poetry scene, connections to conventional portraiture and how Blood of a Poet Box is framed in relation to historical precedents and contemporary artistic movements. <https://bit.ly/2OeyfnX>